



*Working together to link individuals and families affected by Alzheimer's disease and other dementias to a community of learning, services and support.*

## First Link® connects individuals and families to:

- Learning** Dementia education programs offering information about diagnosis and disease progression, day-to-day living, positive approaches to care, strategies for responding to challenges and how to prepare for the future
- Services** Alzheimer Society programs and services, information about other community and health services
- Support** Support groups and individual support

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## Who to refer to First Link®?

- Individuals diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias
- Care partners and family members

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## When to refer?

- As soon as a diagnosis is made
- At any other time during the progression of the disease

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## Why refer?

- It is often difficult for individuals and families to ask for help – a referral provides the first step to getting connected with the Alzheimer Society.
- First Link® lets health professionals focus on the medical aspects of dementia care. Staff at the Alzheimer Society can provide ongoing support, education and help in navigating the health care system.
- Patients receive early access to information, services and ongoing support throughout the continuum of the disease.

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## Who can make a referral?

- Physicians
- Health professionals
- Community organizations and care homes

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## How to refer?

- Ask the individual or family member for permission to forward their name to the Alzheimer Society's First Link® program.
- Complete the one page **referral form** and fax it to First Link® at **1-877-788-5993** or email it to **firstlink@alzheimer.ab.ca**

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## What happens when the Alzheimer Society receives the First Link® referral?

- Once the referral is received, a First Link® coordinator will call the individual or family member to discuss their circumstances.
- A package, with information specific to their needs, will be sent along with contact information for community and health services in the area.
- Follow up contact will be made at six, 12 and 18 months, or sooner if required.
- Once contact has been made with the individual or family, a confirmation letter will be sent to the referring professional.